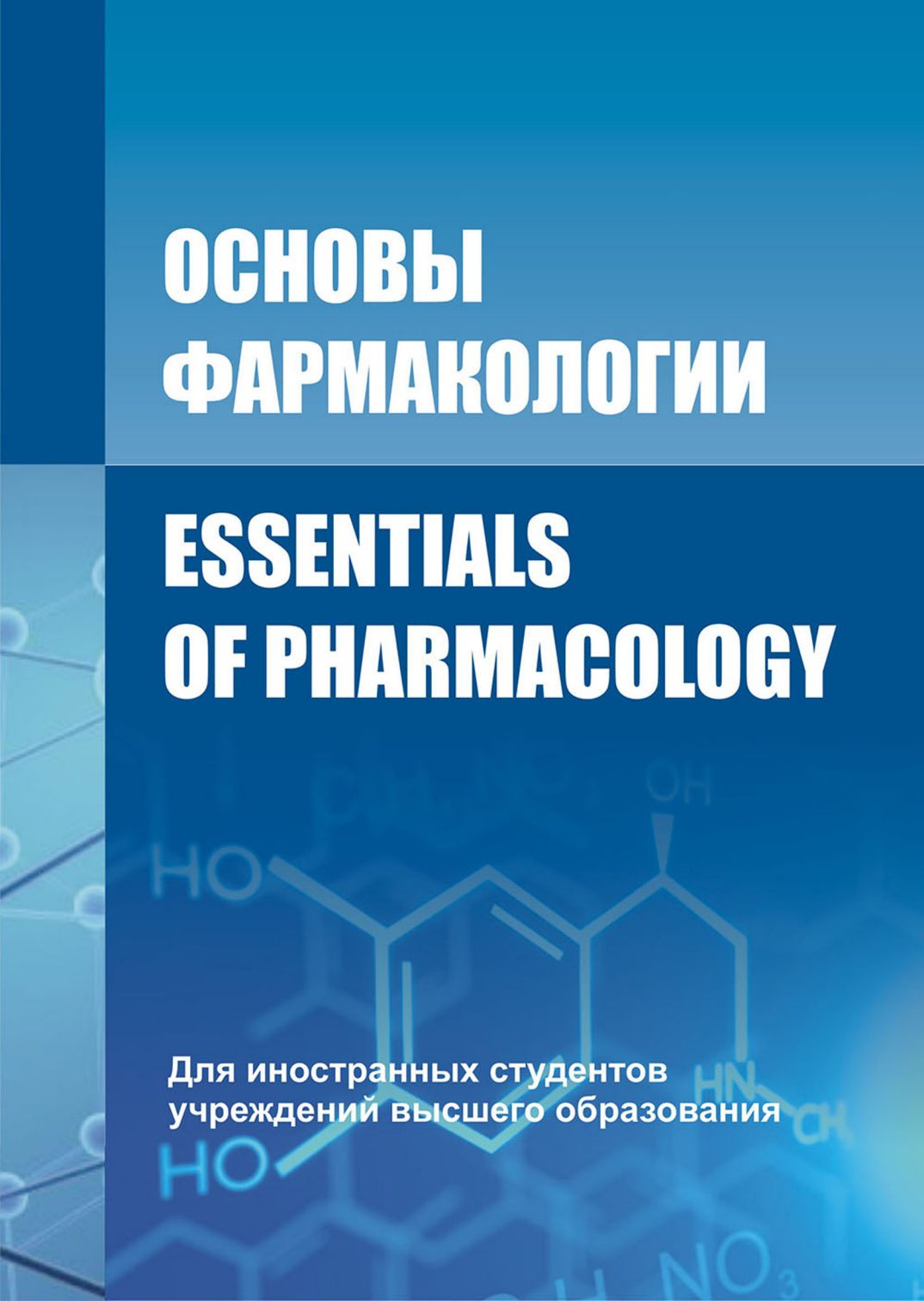
ОСНОВЫ ФАРМАКОЛОГИИ

ESSENTIALS OF PHARMACOLOGY



Для иностранных студентов
учреждений высшего образования

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Учебное пособие представляет собой систематизированную информацию по основным разделам фармакологии: общей фармакологии, нейротропным средствам, средствам, влияющим на функции сердечно-сосудистой, дыхательной и других систем организма, химиотерапевтическим средствам. В пособии даются основные аспекты фармакодинамики и фармакокинетики лекарственных средств, их применения в клинике.

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SECTION 1

PHARMACOLOGY: BASIC PRINCIPLES

INTRODUCTION

Pharmacology can be defined as the science studying interaction of the chemical substances (i.e. drugs) with living systems, which is revealed as a change (activation or inhibition) of natural reactions in the organism.

A **drug** is a chemical substance of any origin (natural or synthetic) which is used for treatment, prevention or diagnosis of diseases. Drugs also include oral contraceptives.

Each drug possesses International Nonproprietary Name (INN) and trade name.

Drugs can be divided into *original* (the drug which is done by the company which developed the drug and which is the owner of the brand name) and *generic* (i.e. copy of the original drug that is produced by other pharmaceutical company after the expiry of the patent of the original drug).

Pharmacology consists of ***pharmacokinetics*** and ***pharmacodynamics***.

Pharmacology is also divided into basic pharmacology and clinical pharmacology. ***Basic pharmacology*** covers mainly mechanisms and effects of drugs at a molecular, cellular, tissue and organ level, whereas clinical pharmacology applies the knowledge of basic pharmacology in clinical situations.

Clinical pharmacology is the science about the clinical use of drugs. It is underpinned by the basic science of pharmacology, with the added focus on the application of pharmacological principles and methods in the real world. It has a broad scope, from the discovery of new target molecules to the effects of drug usage on the whole populations.

***Types of drug therapy* (*medications*):**

- *etiotropic* (*causal*), when the action of the drug is directed at the cause of the disease (for example, antibiotics in infectious diseases);
- *pathogenetic*, when the action of the drug is directed at the processes of pathogenesis of the disease (for example, clonidine causes reduction of the tone of vasomotor center in the treatment of essential hypertension);
- *symptomatic*, when the action of the drug is directed at the elimination of some symptoms (manifestations) of the disease (for example, the elimination of cancer pain with opioid analgesics);

• *replacement*, when the action of the drug is directed at compensate shortage in the body of the hormone, enzyme, etc. (for example, the therapy of diabetes mellitus with insulin);

• *prophylactic*, when the action of the drug is directed at the prevention of the occurrence of disease (for example, the seasonal appointment of salicylates and antibiotics for the prevention of exacerbations of rheumatism).

PHARMACOKINETICS

Basic Concepts and Terms

Pharmacokinetics (literally "movements of the drugs") consists of 1) absorption, 2) distribution and 3) elimination of the drugs. These processes determine how rapidly the drug will appear at the target organ and how long it will be there. Elimination can be subdivided on metabolism and excretion.

Absorption – the transfer of the drug from the site of administration to systemic circulation.

Distribution – the transfer of the drug from the systemic circulation into different organs and tissues of the body.

Elimination – the removal of the drug from the body which involves either (or both) metabolism or excretion.

Routes of Drug Administration

There are following routes of drug administration:

- enteral (via GIT):
  - oral;
  - sublingual;
  - transbuccal;
  - rectal;
- parenteral (bypassing GIT):
  - subcutaneous;
  - intramuscular;
  - intravenous;
  - inhalation;
  - transdermal;
  - intrathecal (subarachnoid);
  - topical.

Oral administration.

Advantages:

- convenient;

- safe;
- economic.

Disadvantages:

- slow development of effect due to:
  – slow absorption in the GIT;
  – passage of drugs through the liver;
- low bioavailability due to:
  – incomplete absorption;
  – the first-pass effect in the liver;
  – destruction of drugs by gastric acid and enzymes;
- some drugs can irritate gastric mucosa.

Sublingual administration. Rapid action is characteristic because a drug is absorbed directly to the systemic blood circulation without passage through the liver. So this route is used in emergent states.

Rectal administration. It may be used when drug absorption in the GIT is impaired, in children or unconscious patients. The most of a drug does not pass through the liver. The area of absorption is relatively small, so not all drugs are well absorbed from the rectum.

Subcutaneous and intramuscular administration. The rapid development of action is characteristic for aqueous solutions, but there are so-called slow-released preparations, that are absorbed slowly, so effect develops slowly but lasts for a long time. Suspensions or oil solutions may be administered by this route. It is not possible to use large volumes of solutions. Irritating drugs can not be injected, especially by subcutaneous route.

Intravenous administration. The effect develops very rapidly (almost immediately); bioavailability is 100%; duration of action is relatively short; only aqueous solutions may be administered, not suspensions or oil solutions.

Inhalation administration. Development of an effect is almost immediate; only gases, volatile fluids or aerosols are administered.

Transdermal administration. In this case, a drug is applied on the skin and is absorbed to the systemic blood circulation through the skin. Slow development and long duration of an effect are typical. The transdermal patch is the most commonly used dosage form.

Topical administration. A drug is used directly to the site of its action, for example, a drug is administered as an ointment on the skin for treatment of some skin disease.

Absorption of Drugs

Mechanisms of absorption (Fig. 1). Absorption (excluding intravenous or intra-arterial route) involves passing through the cell membrane.

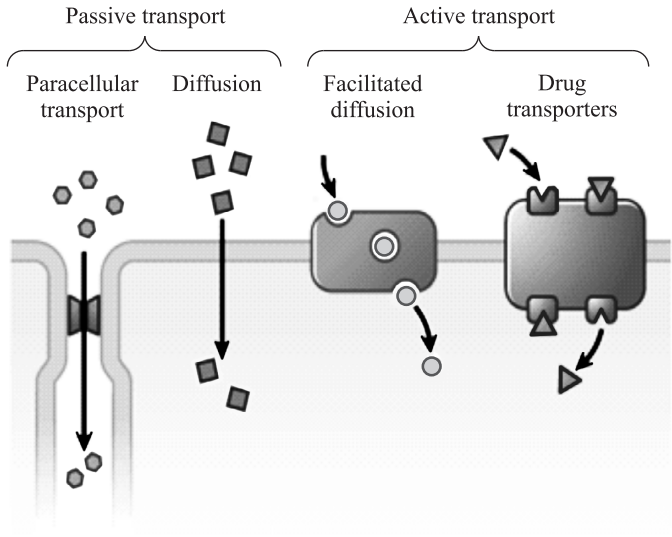

Fig. 1. Mechanisms of absorption

***Passive diffusion* (*passive transport*)** is the most common mechanism of transportation of drugs. It is realized through the membrane's phospholipid bilayer according to the concentration gradient, i.e. from the area with the higher concentration of the drug to the area with the lower concentration of the drug.

***Paracellular transport* (*filtration through membrane pores or through intercellular spaces*)** – only for small (< 100 Da) water-soluble molecules (for example, lithium). It is a subtype of passive diffusion.

Active transport needs the carrier (i.e. protein) and energy (ATP) and follows against a concentration gradient (for example, 5-fluorouracil).

Facilitated diffusion is a subtype of active transport when a drug penetrates through the cell membrane with the help of carrier proteins but without requiring energy.

Pinocytosis exists only for some macromolecules (like phagocytosis or amoeba feeding).

These mechanisms can be applied not only to the absorption of drugs but also to the transportation of drugs through a cell membrane and other biological barriers.

***Bioavailability* (F)** is a fraction (calculated in %) of a drug, which reaches systemic circulation in an unchanged form. The bioavailability indicates the extent of absorption of a drug into the systemic circulation. The highest bioavailability is for intravenous route of administration (100%).

The term *bioequivalence* is used to compare two preparations that contain the same active compound (e.g. generic and original preparation). Two preparations are *bioequivalent* when they have the same bioavailability, the same peak concentration in plasma, and the same time to achieve this peak concentration.

Distribution of Drugs

Volume of distribution (V_d) is a hypothetical volume of body fluids in which the drug is distributed in the same concentration as in the blood. V_d can be calculated as:

$$V_d = \frac{\text{amount of drug in the body}}{C}$$

where C – concentration of the drug after distribution.

If a drug is administered intravenously, the amount of the drug is equal to the dose (D), so the above-mentioned formula can be expressed as:

$$V_d = \frac{D}{C}.$$

V_d may be much more than the real volume of fluid in the body (1000 l and even more), so it is often called as *apparent volume of distribution*. Large V_d means that the drug is accumulated in some tissues. On the other hand, if a drug has extremely low V_d (approximately 3 g in human of the average body weight), distribution of this drug is restricted only to plasma, because it does not penetrate through vessels.

Using V_d it is possible to calculate loading dose (D_l) of the drug:

$$D_l = V_d \times C_t$$

where C_t is the target concentration, i.e. the desired plasma concentration of the drug that is necessary to produce the therapeutic effect.

Compartments are the tissues and organs of the body where the concentration of the drug is equal (where central compartment is blood and peripheral compartment is body tissues – *a bicompartmental model* of the distribution). But the simplest model is *a monocompartmental model*, when the body is only one homogenous compartment which presupposes that blood is a true reflection of the drug's concentration in other fluids or tissues and that the elimination of the drug is directly proportional to the drug's concentration in the organism (first-order kinetics – see below).

Influence of plasma protein binding on the distribution of drugs. Drug + circulating plasma proteins (albumins, etc.) = reversible drug-protein complex. The drugs bound with albumins of plasma can not penetrate through the vessels and do not induce the effect. On the other hand, a relation between bound and free fractions of the drug is a constant value, so when some amount of a free drug leaves the bloodstream, some amount of a bound drug dissociates. Nevertheless, the plasma protein binding slows down the distribution of drugs, and, in general, reduces the rate of development of the effect and its magnitude. The decrease of binding with plasma proteins (in case of hypoproteinemia or due to interaction with other drugs binding with the same proteins) leads to the increase of the effect of a drug and can cause toxic reactions.

Elimination of Drugs

After absorption in the GIT, the drugs are metabolized in the liver (*first-pass effect* or *presystemic elimination*). Therefore, the oral administration of the drug which undergoes to intensive first-pass effect (if metabolites of the drug are pharmacologically inactive) is impossible.

First-order kinetics (a feature of the majority of drugs) is a process of elimination when a *fixed percentage of the drug* is eliminated per one time unit.

Zero-order kinetics (features of just some drugs: ethanol, phenytoin, aspirin, heparin, etc.) is a process of elimination when a *fixed amount of the drug* is eliminated per one time unit (Fig. 2).

Elimination of drugs includes two processes: metabolism and excretion.

Metabolism converts lipid-soluble drugs, which would be reabsorbed from the kidney tubule, into a water-soluble form, which is not reabsorbed,

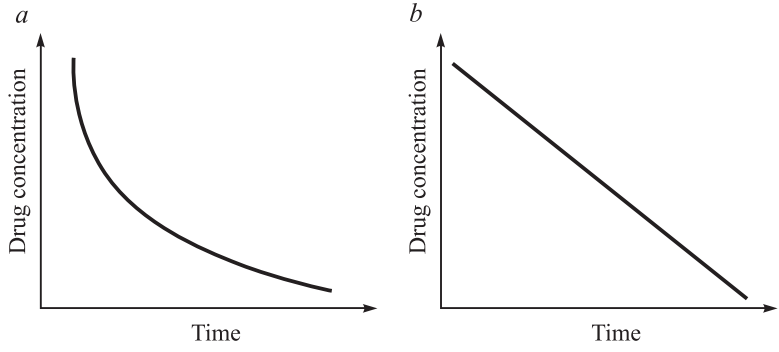

Fig. 2. Plots of zero-order (*a*) and first-order (*b*) drug elimination versus time

capable of being rapidly eliminated in the urine. In the majority of cases, the increase of polarity (of the ionization) is observed as well.

The drug metabolism is divided into two phases: Phase I – non-synthetic reactions (cytochrome P450 mediated reactions: oxidation, reduction, hydrolysis, and hydration); Phase II – synthetic reactions: conjugation with glucuronic acid, acetic acid, etc.).

Excretion is a removal of a drug (or its metabolites) from the organism. The most important route of excretion is excretion via urine by glomerular filtration or by tubular secretion. The most important process that regulates drug excretion by kidneys is reabsorption. Non-polar (lipophilic) molecules are easily reabsorbed and return to the blood. Polar (hydrophilic) molecules are not reabsorbed and easily excreted via urine. So, to be excreted, a drug must be metabolized to a polar water-soluble metabolite.

Other routes of excretion include excretion *via feces* (for drugs that are secreted via bile), *via lungs* (for gases or volatile fluids), *via milk*. Some drugs are reabsorbed in guts and re-enter the hepatic portal vein (enterohepatic circulation).

The most important parameters of the drug elimination are half-life and clearance.

Half-life **($T_{1/2}$)** is the amount of time required to reduce the amount of the drug in the body by half during elimination. $T_{1/2}$ is linked to a) V_d (the higher V_d, the greater $T_{1/2}$ is) and b) clearance (Cl) (the greater the clearance, the lower the $T_{1/2}$):

$$T_{1/2} = \frac{0.7 \times V_d}{Cl}.$$

In this equation 0.7 is an approximation to the natural logarithm of 2 (this is because the elimination is characterized by exponential curve, so twofold decrease of the drug concentration is proportional to ln2).

Clearance is a volume of plasma completely cleared from the drug per time units (ml/min or l/h):

$$Cl = C_{el} \times V_d$$

where C_{el} – an elimination rate constant.

An elimination rate constant reflects the rate of disappearance of the drug from the organism due to metabolism and excretion, namely this coefficient shows the fraction of the drug which is eliminated from the blood per time unit.

Dosing of Drugs on the Base of Pharmacokinetic Parameters

Parameters of distribution and elimination of drugs are used for the calculation of doses.

If a drug is administered with a *constant rate* (e.g. as intravenous infusion), the plasma concentration of the drug increases gradually without significant hesitation. After some time the rate of elimination becomes to be the same as the rate of administration, and the drug concentration becomes to be stable. This is a ***steady-state concentration*** (Css) (Fig. 3):

$$Css = \frac{\text{rate of administration}}{Cl}$$

where Cl is drug clearance.

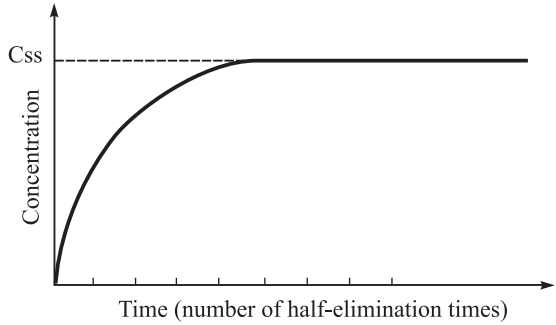

Fig. 3. Concentration-time curve if a drug is administered as intravenous infusion with a constant rate

To calculate the rate which is necessary for the administration of the drug (as intravenous infusion) to achieve Css that corresponds to certain therapeutic concentration, we use the formula:

$$\text{Rate of administration} = Cl \times Css.$$

In most cases *discrete dosing* (*fixed-dose regimen*) is used, i.e. a drug is administered in a certain dose (***maintenance dose*** – D_m) after certain periods of time (t). In this case, we observe the increase of the plasma concentration of the drug after taking of every dose during the processes of absorption and decrease of the concentration after reaching some peak concentration when processes of elimination prevail. During steady state

certain maximal (Css_{max}) and minimal (Css_{min}) concentrations are observed after each dose (Fig. 4).

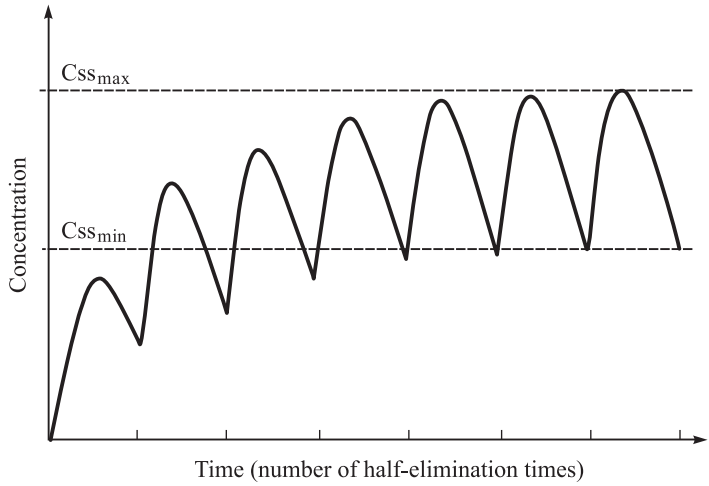

Fig. 4. Concentration-time curve if a drug is administered in accordance with fixed-dose regimen

The maintenance dose that should be administered to achieve the certain steady-state concentration can be calculated by the formula:

$$D_m = \frac{Cl \times Css}{F/100} \times t$$

where t is the time interval between doses; F is bioavailability.

The time that is required to achieve steady-state concentration is approximately 4–5 $T_{1/2}$.

If it is necessary to achieve the target therapeutic concentration (C_t) very rapidly, we must give ***loading dose*** (D_l), which can be calculated in case of intravenous administration by the formula:

$$D_l = V_d \times C_t.$$

For other ways of administration this formula is:

$$D_l = \frac{V_d \times C_t}{F/100}.$$

PHARMACODYNAMICS

Pharmacodynamics (literally "action of the drugs": "Pharmacon" – drug; "Dynamo" – power) studies effects of the drugs and their mechanism of action.

Pharmacodynamics studies actions of the drug at receptors and the effects (physiological / chemical / behavioral / adverse) of the drugs. Pharmacodynamics provides the basis for rational therapeutic uses and the design of new therapeutic agents.

***The main mechanisms of drug's action*:**

- physical (it is determined by some physical processes, for example, activated charcoal possesses absorbing properties and bind toxic substances and gases in the GIT);
- chemical (it is realized by simple chemical reaction, for example, the neutralization of hydrochloric acid in the stomach with sodium bicarbonate and other antacids);
- biochemical (some drugs change the activity of enzymes, for example, acetylcholinesterase inhibitors increase the amount of acetylcholine in synaptic cleft);
- receptor (drugs act via specific receptors; this mechanism is typical for most of drugs).

Receptor as a Key Concept in Pharmacology

The drug molecule interacts as an agonist (activator) or antagonist (inhibitor) with a specific molecule in the biologic system that plays a regulatory role. This target molecule is called a receptor.

Receptor is a specialized macromolecule (protein or nucleic acid), which interacts with a drug and initiate events leading to the drug's effect.

The drug's "shape" is complementary to that of the receptor site in the same way that a key is complementary to a lock.

Receptors can be *classified by nature* on:

- regulatory proteins;
- enzymes;
- transport proteins;
- structural proteins.

The most common class of receptors is ***regulatory proteins***. They mediate the action of hormones or neurotransmitters (ligands of receptors). So, the drugs that interact with receptors increase or, on the contrary, block effects of corresponding hormones or neurotransmitters.

Receptors are divided into types *depending on endogenous ligands*. The most known types are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. **The most known types of receptors depending on their endogenous ligands**

Type of a receptor	Endogenous ligands
Adrenoceptors	Norepinephrine, epinephrine
Cholinoceptors	Acetylcholine
Histamine receptors	Histamine
Serotonin receptors	Serotonin
Purine receptors	Adenosine, ADP, ATP
Opioid receptors	Endorphines, enkephalines
GABA receptors	GABA

Receptor types are divided into subtypes (e.g. cholinoceptors are divided into M- and N-cholinoceptors, adrenoceptors – alpha and beta adrenoceptors).

The receptors can be located on the cell membrane surface or inside of the cell (in the nucleus). ***The cell surface receptor*** or ***transmembrane receptor*** – the receptor that is located in the cell membrane, which receives chemical signal (ligand) from the extracellular compartment and transmits that signal to the intracellular compartment.

The *classification* of the receptors *on the mechanism of the signal transduction into the cell is* (Fig. 5):

- G-protein coupled receptors;
- ligand-regulated transmembrane enzymes (tyrosine kinases);
- ligand-gated ion channels (receptors coupled with ion channels);
- intracellular receptors.

Receptors 1–3 are cell surface (transmembrane) receptors.

G-protein coupled receptors (the majority of the receptors), for example, adrenoceptors, M-cholinergic receptors, opioid receptors. A transmembrane receptor (first chain) linked via G-protein (second chain) to an effector system (third chain) that is an enzyme involved in the intracellular synthesis of second messengers (fourth chain) that causes a pharmacological effect. G-proteins are activated by binding with CTP. The most important effector enzymes include: a) adenylyl cyclase that catalyses generation of cAMP from AMP; b) phospholipase C that contributes to

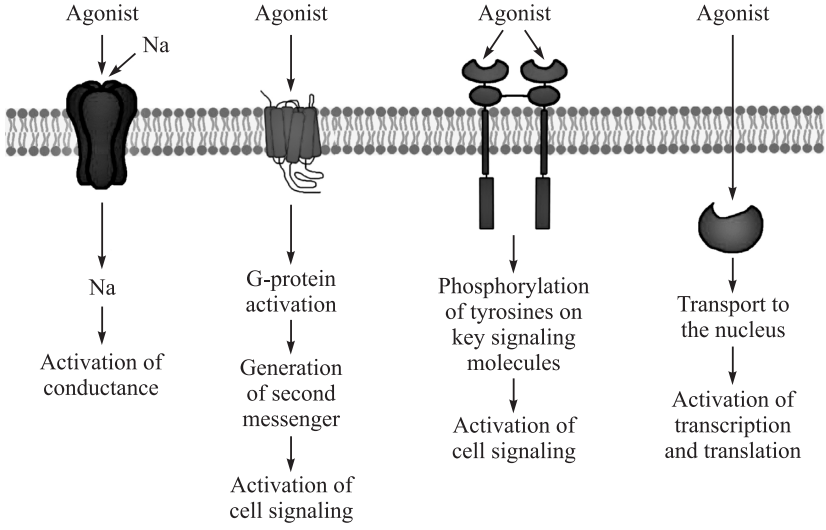

Fig. 5. Types of receptors according to the signal transduction mechanism

release of inositol-triphasphate and diacylglycerol. Inositol-triphosphate, cAMP and diaglycerol serve as second messengers.

***Ligand-regulated transmembrane enzymes* (*tyrosine kinase*)**, for example, insulin receptor, growth hormone receptor. The drug (or natural ligand) which attached to the extracellular part of the receptor on the membrane surface receptor stimulates intracellular part, i.e. a protein kinase inside of cells. This leads to phosphorylation of tyrosine amino acid residues in the regulatory proteins.

Ligand-gated ion channels (the receptors coupled with the ion channels), for example, N-cholinergic receptors, GABA receptors, glutamate and glycine receptors. Binding of the ligand with such receptors leads to the activation or blockade of transmembrane ion channels, which is accompanied by change in permeability of the cell membrane for ions and by change in transmembrane potential.

Intracellular receptors, for example, steroid hormones, vitamin D and A. Lipid-soluble substances penetrate into the membrane and act on intracellular receptors, i.e. proteins in the cytoplasm or cell nucleus.

Drug-Receptor Interactions

Drugs interact with receptors by means of *chemical forces* or *bonds*. The major types of bonds: *covalent* (between atoms that share a pair

of electrons), *ionic* (between two oppositely charged ions), *hydrogen* (between hydrogen and some highly electronegative atom) and *Van der Waals* (between any two atoms or molecules that are in close contact). Covalent bonds are very strong and in many cases irreversible. Van der Waals bonds are the weakest but the most common for drug-receptor binding.

The drug's "shape" is *complementary* to that of the receptor site in the same way that a key is complementary to a lock. This is because chemical forces between a drug and a receptor (especially Van der Waals forces) will be significant just only when chemical groups of the drug and the receptor will be in close contact.

The intensity of the transmembrane signal is determined by the number of receptors which are occupied (the more receptors are occupied, the more effect is produced by the drug).

Drugs may influence the transmembrane signal by direct binding to the receptor or to its nearby site.

Affinity is the ability of the drug to bind with the receptor.

Intrinsic activity is an ability of the drug to stimulate the receptor inducing pharmacological effects.

Agonists are drugs, which bind to the receptor and activate it causing the effect in the cell. So, they have *both affinity* and *intrinsic activity*. In the organism, agonists cause the effect similar to the effect of the endogenous ligand. For example, the effects of adrenergic receptor agonists are similar to the effects of epinephrine and norepinephrine.

Drugs that cause the same effect as agonists but do not bind directly with the receptor are known as *drugs that act allosterically*.

Antagonists bind to the receptor but do not activate it. So, they have *only affinity but not intrinsic activity*. In the organism, antagonists cause the effect opposite to the effect of the ligand.

Partial agonists have affinity but lower efficacy than full agonists. Their maximal effect is less than the maximal effect of the full agonists. In presence of a high concentration of the full agonists the partial agonists may act as antagonists.

Accordingly to the recent data, some amount of the receptors is in active form without ligand (agonist). Drugs that bind to the receptors and decrease the fraction of active receptors are ***inverse agonists.***

The Types of Action of Drugs

Local action develops before the absorption to the systemic circulation at the site of application.

Resorptive (systemic) action is observed after the absorption to the systemic circulation.

CONTENTS

PREFACE 3

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT 4

SECTION 1. PHARMACOLOGY: BASIC PRINCIPLES 5

Introduction 5
Pharmacokinetics 6
Basic Concepts and Terms 6
Pharmacodynamics 14
Receptor as a Key Concept in Pharmacology 14
Drug-Receptor Interactions 16
The Types of Action of Drugs 17
Adverse (Side) Effects of Drugs 18
Dependence of Drug Effect on a Dose 19
Interaction of Drugs 21
The Action of Drugs after Repeated Administrations 22
Factors that Influence Pharmacokinetics and Pharmacodynamics 23
Age 23
Gender 24
Genotype 25
Diurnal (Circadian) Rhythms 25
The Physiological and Pathological State of the Organism 25

SECTION 2. DRUGS ACTING ON THE PERIPHERAL NERVOUS SYSTEM 26

Drugs Acting on the Afferent Nervous System 26
Local Anesthetics 26
Astringent Drugs 29
Adsorbing Drugs 29
Counterirritant Drugs 30
Cholinergic Agonists 30
General Features of the Efferent Nervous System. Cholinergic Synapses and Cholinergic Receptors 30
Muscarinic Agonists (M-Cholinomimetics) 34
Nicotinic Agonists (N-Cholinomimetics) 35
Agonists of Muscarinic and Nicotinic Receptors (M-, N-Cholinomimetics) 36
Cholinergic Antagonists 38
Muscarinic Receptor Antagonists (Antimuscarinic Drugs, M-Cholinoblockers) 38
Ganglionic Blocking Drugs 41

Neuromuscular Blocking Drugs 42
Drugs which Inhibit Release of Acetylcholine from Presynaptic Endings 44
Adrenergic Agonists 44
General Features of Adrenergic Synapses, Adrenergic Receptors, and Adrenergic Agonists 44
Alpha / Beta Adrenergic Receptor Agonists (Alpha / Beta Adrenomimetics) 48
Alpha Adrenergic Receptor Agonists (Alpha Adrenomimetics) 50
Beta Adrenergic Receptor Agonists (Beta Adrenomimetics) 51
Dopamine Receptor Agonists 52
Adrenergic Antagonists 52
Alpha Adrenergic Receptor Antagonists (Alpha Adrenoblockers) 53
Beta Adrenergic Receptor Antagonists (Beta Adrenoblockers) 55
Alpha / Beta Adrenergic Receptor Antagonists 57
Sympatholytics (Adrenergic Neuron Blocking Drugs) 58

SECTION 3. DRUGS ACTING ON THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM 59

General Anesthetics, Hypnotics, and Alcohols 59
General Anesthetics 59
Hypnotics 63
Alcohols 67
Analgesics 69
Opioid Analgesics 70
Non-Opioid Analgesics (Analgesic-Antipyretic Drugs) 75
Drugs Used for the Treatment of Epilepsy and Parkinsonism 76
Antiepileptic Drugs 76
Drugs Used in Parkinsonism 80
Antipsychotic and Anxiolytic Drugs 83
Antipsychotic Drugs 83
Anxiolytic Drugs 87
Antidepressants and Mood-Stabilizing Drugs 90
Antidepressants 90
Mood-Stabilizing (Antimanic) Drugs 95
CNS Stimulants and Nootropic Drugs 96
CNS Stimulants (Psychostimulants, Psychomotor Stimulants) 96
Nootropic Drugs 98

SECTION 4. DRUGS ACTING ON THE CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM 99

Antihypertensive Drugs 99
Pharmacological Properties of Individual Groups 102
The Drugs used for the Treatment of Coronary Artery Disease (Ischemic Heart Disease) and Other Vascular Disorders. Hypolipidemic Drugs 109

Antianginal Drugs 110
Treatment of Non-Complicated Myocardial Infarction 114
Hypolipidemic Drugs 114
Drugs for the Treatment of Disturbances of Cerebral Blood Flow 118
Drugs Used in Disturbances of Peripheral Blood Flow 120
Drugs Used in Erectile Dysfunction 121
Drugs Used for the Treatment of Heart Failure 123
Antiarrhythmic Drugs 132

SECTION 5. DRUGS ACTING ON THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM, GENITOURINARY TRACT, GASTROINTESTINAL TRACT, AND BLOOD 140

Drugs Acting on the Respiratory System 140
Antitussive Drugs 140
Expectorants 141
Drugs for the Treatment of Bronchial Obstruction Syndrome (Bronchial Asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) 141
Drugs for the Treatment of Pulmonary Edema 144
Drugs acting on the Genitourinary Tract 145
Diuretics 145
Drugs that Act on Myometrium 155
Drugs that Act on the Gastrointestinal Tract 157
Drugs Used in Disorders of Appetite 157
Drugs Used in Disturbances of Gastric Secretion 158
Drugs which Influence Vomiting Reflex (Emetic and Antiemetic Drugs) 163
Drugs Used in Disorders of Pancreatic Gland 165
Drugs that Influence Bowel and Intestine 167
Drugs that Act on Liver and Bile Ducts 170
Drugs Acting on the Blood 171
Drugs Acting on Hemostasis 172
Drugs Acting on Hematopoiesis 179

SECTION 6. HORMONES AND AUTACOIDS 181

Hormones of Polypeptide Structure and Aminoacid Derivatives, Their Synthetic Analogs and Antagonists 181
Hormones of Hypothalamus, Pituitary and Pineal Gland 181
Hormones of Thyroid and Parathyroid Gland. Drugs that Regulate Calcium Metabolism 184
Hormones of Pancreas. Oral Hypoglycemic Drugs 186
Steroidal Hormones, Their Synthetic Analogs and Antagonists 190
Glucocorticoids 191
Mineralocorticoids 193
Estrogens 193
Progestins 194

Antagonists of Steroidal Hormones 195
Autacoids 196
Histamine 196
Serotonin 198
Eicosanoids 201
Nitric Oxide 206
Vasoactive Peptides 208

SECTION 7. DRUGS THAT ACT ON IMMUNE SYSTEM AND INFLAMMATION 211

Drugs Acting on Immune System 211
Drugs for the Treatment of the Immediate-Type Hypersensitivity 212
Immunosuppressive Drugs (Immunosuppressants) 215
Drugs for the Treatment of Immunodeficiencies (Immunostimulants) 219
Anti-Inflammatory Drugs 221
Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs 222
Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs 224
Disease-Modifying Anti-Rheumatic Drugs (Slow-Acting Anti-Inflammatory Drugs) 225
Drugs that Are Used in Gout 228

SECTION 8. ANTIBACTERIAL AND ANTIFUNGAL DRUGS 229

General Principles of Chemotherapy. Beta-Lactam Antibiotics 229
Penicillins 232
Cephalosporins 234
Carbapenems 237
Monobactams 237
Protein Synthesis Inhibitors and Other Antibiotics 238
Tetracyclines 238
Tigecycline 239
Macrolides 239
Aminoglycosides 241
Lincosamides 243
Antibiotics of Various Groups 244
Synthetic Antibacterial Drugs 246
Sulfonamides 246
Quinolones and Fluoroquinolones 248
Nitrofurans 250
Nitroimidazoles 251
Linezolid 251
Drugs for the Treatment of Tuberculosis and Leprosy 251
Drugs for the Treatment of Tuberculosis 251
Drugs for the Treatment of Leprosy 255
Antifungal Drugs 255

SECTION 9. OTHER CHEMOTHERAPEUTIC DRUGS 259

Antiprotozoal and Antihelminthic Drugs 259
Antiprotozoal Drugs 259
Antihelminthic Drugs 263
Antiviral Drugs 264
Structure of a Virus 264
Influenza Virus 265
Anti-Influenza Drugs 265
Human Herpesviruses 268
Anticancer Drugs 276
Cytostatics 278
Targeted Drugs 280
Hormonal and Anti-Hormonal Drugs 281

LITERATURE 282